



## AIR FORCE GENERAL LIBRARIES

## Executive Summary



**USAF**  
**SERVICES**  
*Combat Support & Community Service*





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The vision of Air Force libraries is to provide the capability for officers, enlisted members, and civilian employees to access information and education resources anytime, anywhere to meet both mission and individual needs. In support of the Air Force quality of life initiatives, this vision also includes providing professional library programs and services for families, retirees, and other authorized users.

Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) [4-740-20F](#) *Design: Libraries* was created to provide guidance during the planning, programming, design, and construction phases of development for library facilities that meet mission requirements and fulfill Air Force's goal of library services excellence. The following document is an Executive Summary that provides highlights of the detailed information provided in the UFC.



## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) [4-740-20F](#) *Design: Libraries* was developed by the Libraries Branch of the HQ Air Force Services Agency (HQ AFSVA) and provides guidelines for evaluating, planning, programming, and designing Air Force general libraries.

This UFC provides guidance for development of library facilities appropriate to support the local program operations for individual Air Force installations and the [AFSVA Golden Eagle Standards](#) (GES) for library operations. This information may be used by architects, engineers, designers, base civil engineers, library directors, major command and headquarters review personnel, and others involved in the development and approval of library construction projects.

Information provided by this UFC applies to the design of all new construction projects including additions, alterations, and renovation projects in the continental United States and overseas.

## LIBRARIES MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Air Force libraries is to provide professional library programs and services to meet the military mission, educational, and leisure-time needs of the base community, including active duty personnel, families, retirees, civilian employees, and other authorized users.



### 1 - Mission Support

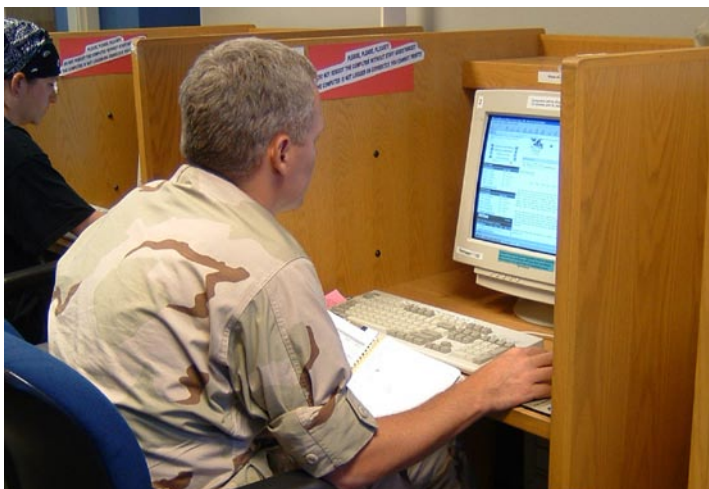
Installation mission support is the primary focus of each Air Force library.

### 2 - Educational Support

Support for professional military education and voluntary education programs for active duty military personnel and authorized civilians is the second priority for Air Force library facilities, programs, and services.

### 3 - Quality of Life Support

Air Force library facilities, programs, and services help improve the quality of life for active duty personnel, their families, retirees, and other authorized customers.



## LIBRARY CLASSIFICATIONS

General libraries are the most common type of library facilities and programs at most Air Force installations. These facilities offer information, materials, collections, and services similar to general public libraries found in most communities and schools.

### General Libraries

General libraries are centralized facilities that serve the whole installation and its entire population. These facilities may be large, medium, or small depending upon the military population and other unique requirements at each base.



### Learning Resource Centers

Learning resource centers (LRC) are established at forward locations to provide deployed members the opportunity to access informational and educational resources to continue their professional and personal development. These facilities support sustained operations where other education and library services do not exist.



### Library Extension Services

Library extension services (LES) may have general library functions or may emphasize a specific technical function with specialized collections. They may lack activities, children's functions, and a formal staffing structure. Facilities are based on local conditions and identified requirements of the community served. Extension services libraries include the following types of facilities:

#### □ Branch Libraries

Branch libraries offer a full range of materials and services. They have set operating hours, separate quarters, a paid staff, and a basic collection of materials. A general library or library service center directs branch operations.

#### □ Field Libraries

Field libraries house a collection of general reading materials issued from and directed by a general library or library service center. Field libraries may or may not have set operating hours or a paid staff and may operate on the honor system.

#### □ Site Libraries

Site libraries contain a collection of print and non-print materials issued to a remote location at the request of the local installation or services commander to enhance library services. They may or may not have a paid staff and set operating hours. Site libraries operate under the administration of the local site commander and are serviced from a general library or library service center.

#### □ Expeditionary Libraries

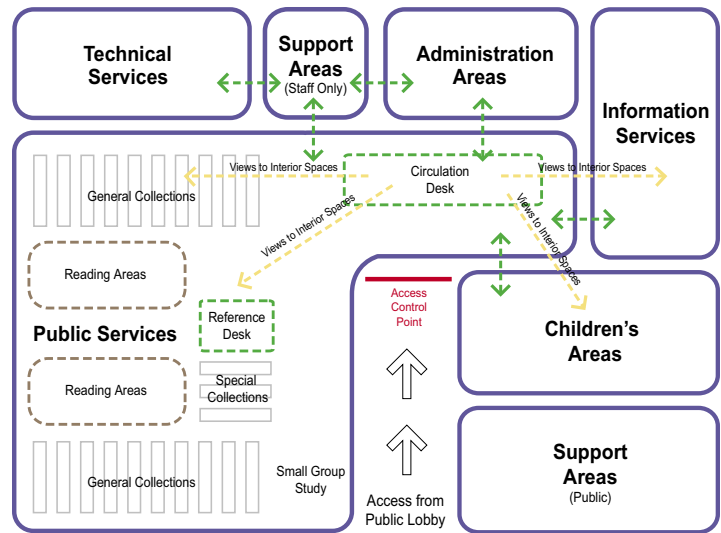
Expeditionary libraries support special OCONUS military operations with less than 500 personnel or until the establishment of an LRC is justified and approved. Collections of paperback books, newspapers, periodicals, and audio/visual materials are issued to library-inaccessible locations that are serviced from a MAJCOM, general library, or library service center.



### CORE FUNCTIONAL AREAS

General libraries have six specific core functional areas:

- ❑ **Public Services**
- ❑ **Information Services**
- ❑ **Children's Areas**
- ❑ **Administration Areas**
- ❑ **Technical Services Areas**
- ❑ **Support Areas**



### Public Services

The main component of all library facilities are the public services areas that primarily address materials and equipment for adults, including general and special collections, reading areas, on-line public access computer terminals, audio/visual collections and stations, reference materials, study areas, circulation spaces, reproduction areas, and service desks.





## Information Services

Information services areas consist of customer use computer workstations, computer labs, equipment, and related infrastructure, as required. Consider the need for a computer lab that may be shared with the base education center.



## Children's Areas

Dedicated children's areas are needed at facilities that serve families. Major components of the children's areas include general collections, computer stations, reading areas, audio/visual collections, story alcoves, and activity areas.





## Administration Areas

Administrative areas include offices for the library director, assistant library director, and information technology administrator. Other spaces include a server room, staff break room, staff restrooms, staff circulation, and storage areas.



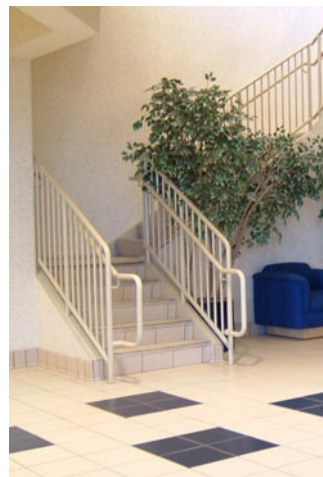
## Technical Services Areas

Technical services include large workroom areas for acquisitions, cataloging, receiving, processing, holds, reserves, weeding areas, and supply storage.



## Support Areas

Areas that support the overall facility include the airlock, vestibule, lobby, circulation areas, restrooms, hallways, exhibit spaces, conference/meeting rooms, and coffee cafes.





## SITE EVALUATION AND LOCATION

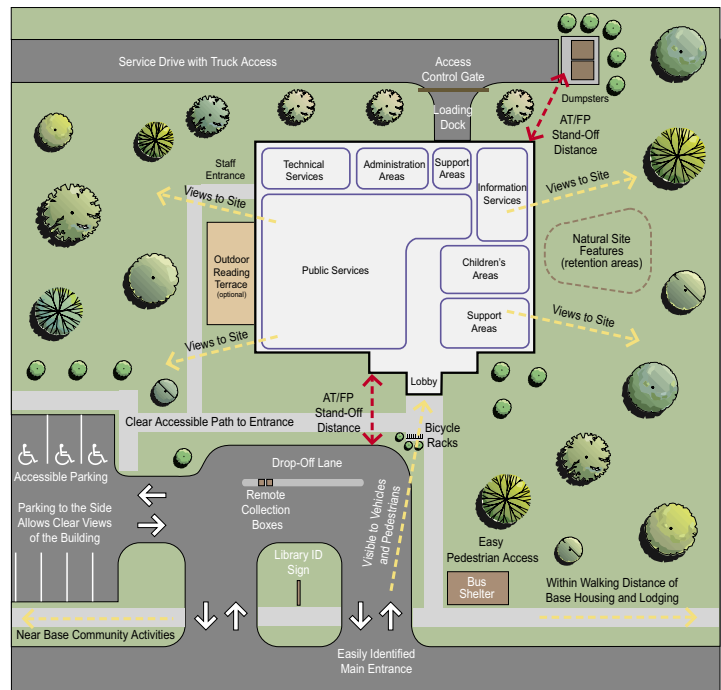
Library facilities should be convenient and located near the center of base activities yet in relatively quiet and uncongested areas. Consider locating them near the health and wellness center, the family discovery center, dormitories, housing, and shopping areas. Library extension services facilities and learning resource centers should be central to their respective service areas. They may be included as parts of composite facilities with other community or mission related functions.



## SITE DESIGN

Site libraries so that the main entrances are clearly visible. It is important to preserve and utilize natural site features. Important site issues to be addressed during the design process include the following:

- ❑ **Parking**
- ❑ **Building Access**
- ❑ **Drop-off Areas**
- ❑ **Remote Book and A/V Collection Boxes**
- ❑ **Service Drives**
- ❑ **Landscaping**





## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Unique local requirements concerning building programs, design criteria, and technical systems should consider the following:

- ❑ Existing library facilities on base and their adequacies and inadequacies relative to current and future needs.
- ❑ Potential for retention and renovation of existing facilities or need for additions or complete new construction projects.
- ❑ Current and projected user population to be served by the proposed facility.
- ❑ Specific population categories with different library needs such as spouses, children, and retirees.



## Site Selection Criteria

- ❑ Consider the potential for sharing some functional areas with the base education center utilizing a consolidated structure, if possible.
- ❑ Locate base libraries within walking distance of base operations, housing areas, shopping, and recreational facilities.
- ❑ Choose a site with a prominent and visible location. The facility should be easily identifiable from approaching cars, base transportation, and pedestrian pathways.
- ❑ Avoid noisy locations such as those near busy intersections and arterials, airfields, and manufacturing facilities.





## BUILDING DESIGN

Computer areas, reading spaces, and the general collection materials should be located in the center of the library. Other spaces such as teen areas, reference collections, group study rooms, carrels, and administration or support areas should surround the main reading and computer areas to define their boundaries.



## Flexibility and Expansion

The quantity of shelving provided should accommodate 20 years' anticipated growth of all collections and new technologies. Design the structural system for easy expansion.

## Architectural Character

Present an open, inviting image, while providing visibility of attractive activities from the approach and entrance. The library should have spaces that vary in character and scale to support different activities. Interior spaces should emulate the environments found at upscale commercial bookstores with a range of lounge-like areas.

## Supervision and Security

Provide only one public entrance/exit that is a prominent architectural component to facilitate customer wayfinding. A separate staff only entrance may also be provided that is not in a prominent location, but near dedicated staff parking areas. Include theft prevention and security equipment.



## Special Considerations for Renovations

All building and functional area design criteria and recommended relationships apply to renovation projects. An existing structure selected for use as a library must be large and flexible enough to accommodate the full range of functions and programs.



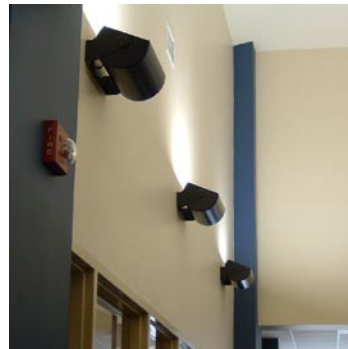
## INTERIOR DESIGN

Surface materials and furnishings should be coordinated and selected by professional interior designers. Choose furniture that is durable, comfortable, and attractive. Walls may be composed of gypsum wallboard on steel studs, block walls, plaster on block walls, or other similar systems.



## Interior Lighting

Libraries have specific lighting requirements that should be coordinated with the specific design details of each functional area. General lighting should be designed to provide lights from as many directions as possible and generally utilize fluorescent fixtures with low temperature, energy efficient ballasts, and lamps.



## Flooring

Libraries should be carpeted throughout to help minimize noise levels, except for heavy traffic areas like lobbies, restrooms, storage, and mechanical rooms.

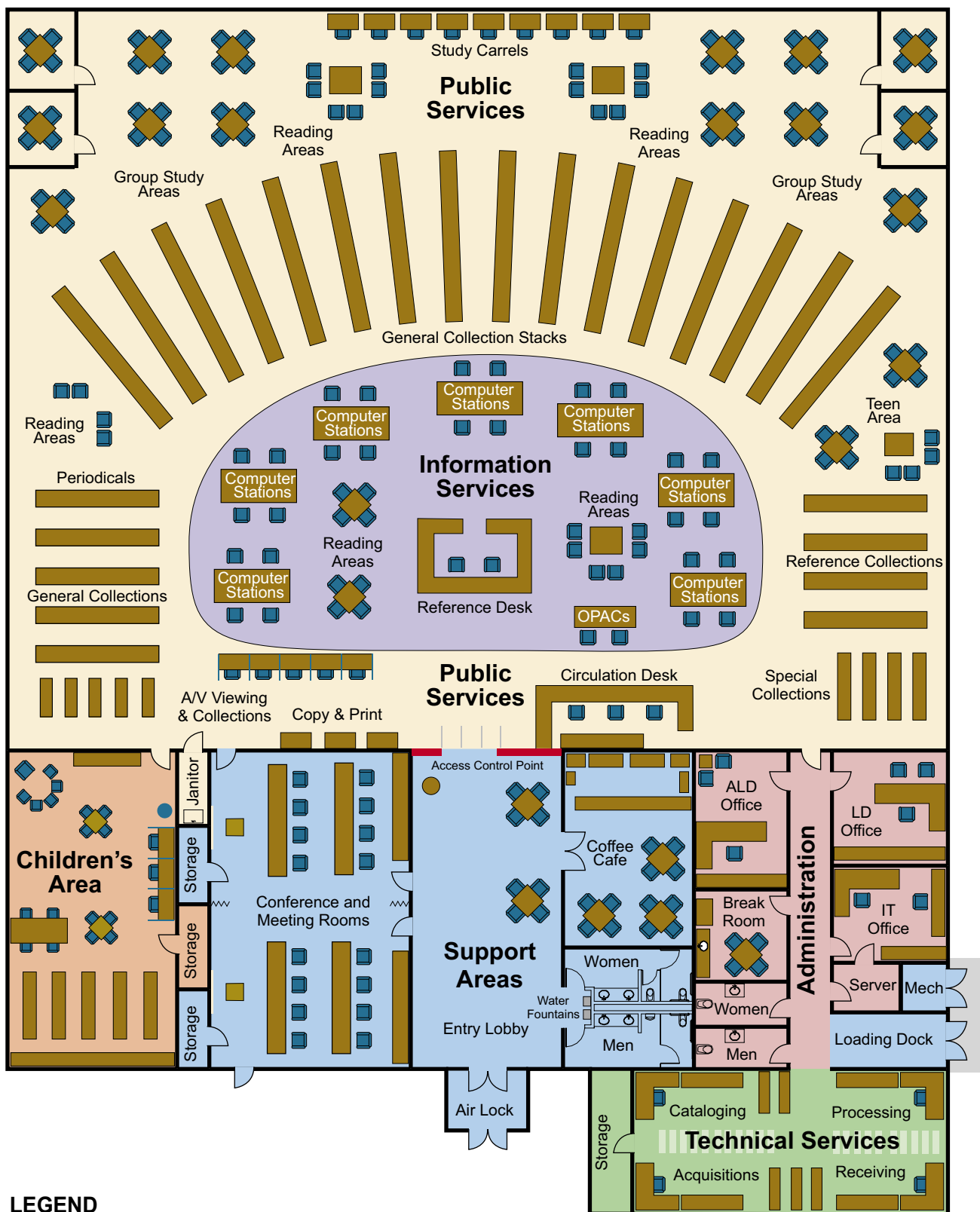


## Ceilings

Acoustical ceilings should be provided throughout libraries, with the exception of service areas. Gypsum ceilings may be utilized to accentuate architectural features.







Example Medium General Library Floor Plan

## PUBLICATION INFORMATION

This Executive Summary is provided as a supplement to the existing Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) document UFC [4-740-20F](#) *Design: Libraries*.

### Previous Publications

None

### Revisions

None

### Air Staff Endorsement Date:

Month Year

### Website URL:

<http://www-p.afsv.af.mil/FC/DesignGuides.htm>

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